

Hot- Weather Tips from the Energy Policy Division, Indiana Department of Commerce

Summer is here! With the fun and sun comes the possibilities of a heat wave, drought, and higher electric bills. You can keep yourself cool and save energy by making simple choices in your day-to-day life. Avoid overheating your office, your house, and your body with the following tips:

At Work

Put your computer in “sleep mode” if you are going to be away from your desk for a large amount of time (during lunch, for example, or during long meetings); turn it off at the end of the day

If you have thermostat control, turn it up to 78 degrees or higher; 78 degrees is the guideline set by the U.S. Department of Energy

Keep blinds in the office closed, especially at the time of day that the sun shines directly into your office

Turn off lights when leaving your office

Use fewer lights, if possible

If you have lamps in your office, use light-colored lampshades

Do not hold doors open for longer than necessary

Turn off typewriters when not in use

Do not use handicapped-access automatic door openers if you are able-bodied

Avoid using elevators if you are only traveling a few floors

Turn off office radios you leave the office; do not use them at all when energy conservation is called for

At Home

Keep blinds closed during the day when the sun is at its brightest

Turn up your air-conditioning thermostat, especially when you are not at home; for every two degrees you raise your thermostat, you can reduce your cooling cost by about five percent

Keep doors and windows closed, even if you walk outside only momentarily

Keep vents clean and do not block vents with furniture or with long, heavy curtains

Use your oven less often, as it heats the kitchen and surrounding areas; use a toaster oven or - better yet - use your microwave!

Keep burners and the pans under them clean in order to maximize stovetop efficiency

Replace refrigerator door seals if worn. To test, close the door on a dollar bill. If it pulls out easily, it needs to be replaced. Keep the refrigerator set between 37 and 40 degrees

Use ceiling fans in your home for air circulation

Make sure your attic is adequately insulated and open vents in your attic to reduce the buildup of heat

If you have a swimming pool at home, turn off its heat pump

Avoid using appliances during high-demand energy periods

When buying major household appliances, purchase equipment with the Energy Star* label. **The "Energy Star" label is a registered trademark*

Water Conservation

Turn off the water when you brush your teeth or shave

Wash dishes together and in your sink, not individually with the water running

If you have a dishwasher, wait until it is full to run it

Run full loads of laundry, and adjust water levels accordingly

Always rinse clothes with cold water

If you have an automatic sprinkler system for your lawn, set it to run at dawn. This way your lawn will fully absorb the water it needs before it is exposed to harsh sunlight. Watering the lawn at midday will have the water evaporate too quickly to be effective, while watering the lawn during the evening can cause the roots rot from overexposure to standing water.

Avoid over-watering your lawn

Store drinking water in the refrigerator to avoid turning on the faucet every time you want a glass of water

Try to find other uses for drinking water before pouring it into the sink (i.e. watering your plants)

Check for and repair leaks around the house, including dripping faucets

Install ultra-low flush toilets and low flow showerheads

Keep Yourself Cool

Wear light-colored and lightweight fabrics

Wear synthetic fabrics as they do not absorb water as easily as cotton; synthetic fabrics such as polyester allow perspiration to evaporate from your skin more quickly, thus allowing your body to cool more effectively

Drink plenty of water. This usually means drinking at least eight glasses of water a day. Hot weather, however, increases the body's need for fluids

Drink water not only after exercise, but beforehand as well as *while* you exercise

Avoid caffeine and alcohol on extremely hot days, as both dehydrate the body

Wear a hat with a wide rim; beach hats are more effective than baseball caps

Always use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15

Sources:

Indianapolis Power and Light Company, "75 Ways to Save Energy at Home."

U.S. Department of Energy, "Energy Efficient Consumer Tips,"
www.eren.doe.gov/tipsheet.htm

American Water and Energy Savers, "Save Water 49 Ways," www.americanwater.com

"Fluid Fluency: Everything you need to know about hydrating in the heat,"
www.runnersworld.com

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